



# Wedding Book

Written By: Lesley Patterson Marx



## TOOLS:

- [Awl \(1\)](#)
- [Binder's needle \(1\)](#)  
*or other strong needle*
- [Crafty knife \(1\)](#)
- [Cutting surface \(1\)](#)  
*such as a self-healing mat or large piece of matboard*
- [Fingernail file \(1\)](#)
- [Large metal ruler \(1\)](#)
- [Ordinary craft glue \(1\)](#)
- [Paintbrushes \(1\)](#)  
*for glue*
- [Pencil \(1\)](#)
- [Super glue \(1\)](#)
- [Utility knife \(1\)](#)
- [Wire cutters \(1\)](#)



## PARTS:

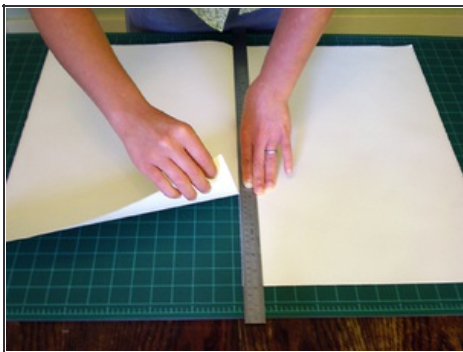
- [Bone folder \(1\)](#)
- [Wax paper \(1\)](#)
- [Matboard \(1\)](#)  
*for making a book cradle*
- [Paper \(20"x26"\)](#)
- [Book board \(1\)](#)  
*aka binder's board*
- [Colored papers \(1\)](#)
- [Book cloth \(1\)](#)  
*from specialty paper or bookbinding suppliers, or make your own from fabric and Therm O Web's HeatnBond iron-on adhesive, following the directions included in this project*
- [Mica or polycarbonate plastic \(1\)](#)  
*from Tar Heel Mica, (828) 765-4535, or Micro-Mark ([micromark.com](http://micromark.com))*
- [Miniature nails \(1\)](#)  
*from [micromark.com](http://micromark.com)*
- [Book cradle \(1\)](#)

from a bookbinding supplier, or make your own following the directions at the end of the project

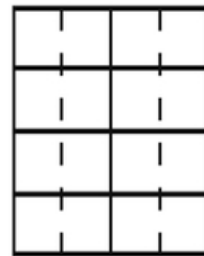
## SUMMARY

A lovely book, bound by your own hands, may be just the thoughtful yet utilitarian gift idea you've been searching for. The cover can incorporate a window that reveals the invitation, a small drawing, a photograph, or anything else you may think of. This versatile binding makes a great guest book (in which case you may want to reveal your gift idea ahead of time), a photo album, or a place for the couple to hold the memorabilia they collect through the years. It can even continue on as a guest book for their home, a place for out-of town visitors or dinner guests to make a little sketch and muse about the present moment.

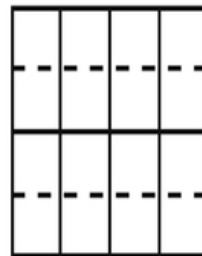
### Step 1 — Prepare the paper.



Horizontal book



Vertical book



**Solid line = Cut or tear**

**Dashed line = Fold  
(horizontally or vertically)**

- Decide the direction of your book. Will the pages fold horizontally or vertically?
- Fold the large paper sheet in half. Place the bone folder on the folded edge and run it flat along the fold. Reinforce the fold by repeating on the other side. Open the paper and place the metal ruler along the fold. Steady the ruler with one hand and tear the paper in half with the other, starting at the top.
- Continue tearing the pages in this way, along the solid lines.
- With the bone folder, fold the pages to their intended size along the dashed lines shown above, and nest 4 together into a signature. Make as many signatures as needed.
- Achieve a straight edge by using a craft knife instead of tearing.



**Step 2 — Wrap the spine and cut the boards.**

- Cut the guards, using colored paper. These will wrap around the folded edge of each signature, adding thickness to the spine and allowing room for the book to “swell.” To determine the length of the guards, add 1" to the length of the spine. The width of each guard is 2". Fold the guards in half lengthwise and wrap 1 around the spine of each signature.
- To determine the size of your cover boards, measure the length and width of a folded signature. Add ¼" to each measurement.
- Mark where you'll cut the book board. Steady the ruler with one hand, and with the other draw the utility knife from the top to the bottom of the board. Go over the scored line until the board releases. Repeat for the second board.
- Test the grain of the board before cutting. Bend it in both directions. Make note of which direction is strongest and cut accordingly.
- Mark the dimensions of the window, then score it along all sides until it releases. Mark the corners of the window to avoid cutting past them. Sand the edges smooth with a fingernail file.

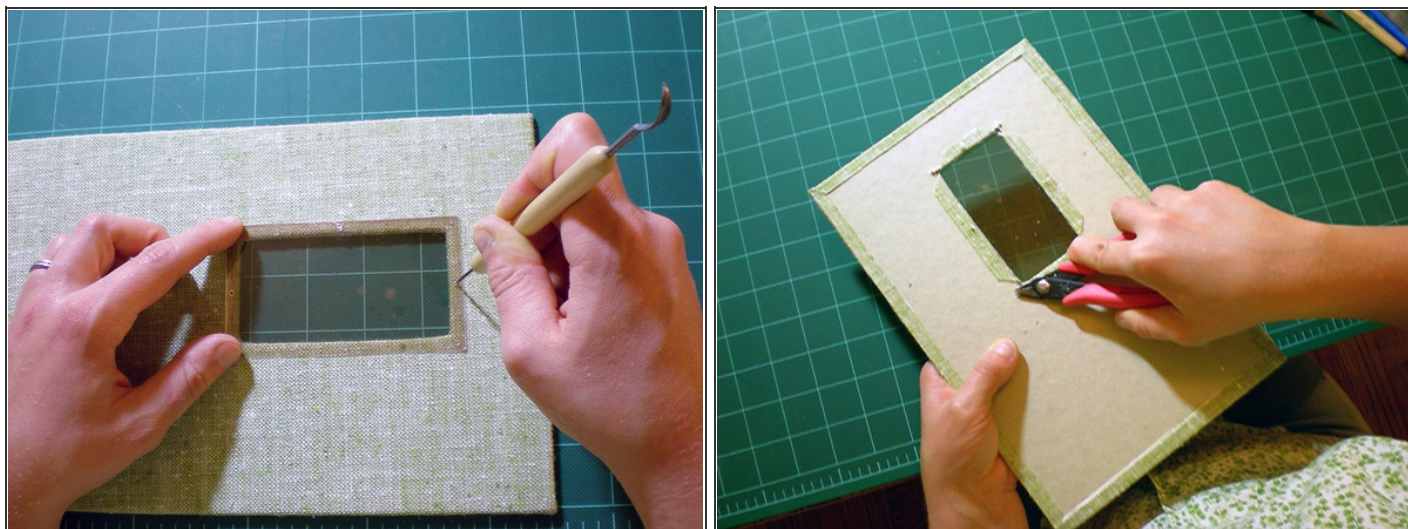


### Step 3 — Cover the boards.



- To determine the size of the book cloth, add 1" to the height and width of your boards. Cut 2 pieces. Center the boards over the book cloth and trace. For the board with the window, also mark  $\frac{1}{4}$ " from the edges of the window, where the book cloth will fold.
- Place wax paper on your work surface to protect it from the glue. Using a brush, smear PVA glue on the book board, then place the glue-saturated board onto the book cloth. Press it down with your hand, then flip it over. Use the bone folder to adhere the book cloth. Be sure to finish the first board before starting the second.
- Trim the excess book cloth. Place your ruler 1 board's thickness away from the corner, at a  $45^\circ$  angle. Mark, then cut. Repeat for the remaining corners. For the board with the window, cut along the marks drawn within the window, then cut toward the window corners  $45^\circ$  diagonally — but don't cut all the way to the corners, or the book board will show through.
- Choose an edge of the book cloth and smear glue on the underside. Fold the book cloth over the board and hold until it sets. Repeat for the other 3 edges, the window edges, and the remaining cover.

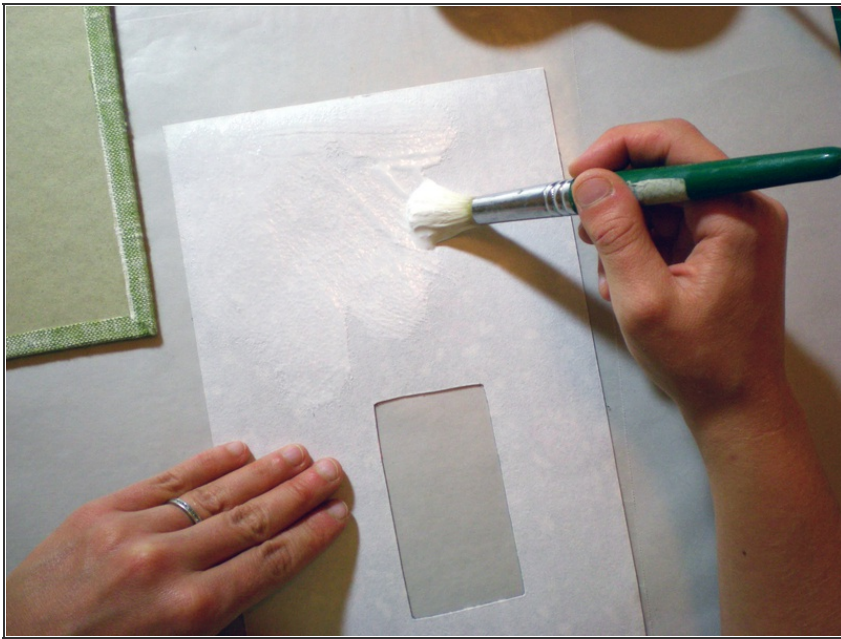
## Step 4 — Put the window in place.



- The window can be made of mica or polycarbonate. Both can be cut with scissors or a knife. Cut the material to size (slightly larger than the opening).
- Use an awl to poke holes in the window where nails will be placed. Place the mica or polycarbonate over the opening, then use it as a template to pierce holes through the board as well.
- Place miniature nails in the holes. The nails may go through the back of the board. If necessary, clip the nail ends even with the board, using wire cutters. Add a drop of super glue over each nail hole and let it dry.

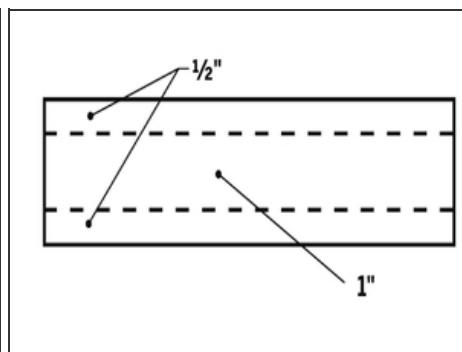
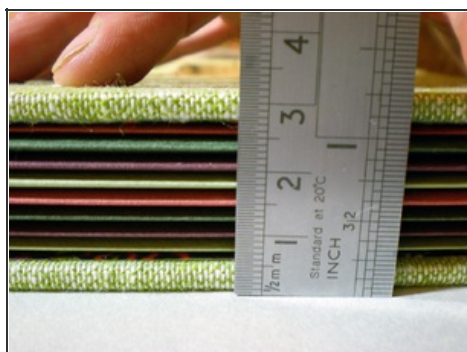


## Step 5 — Cover the inside.



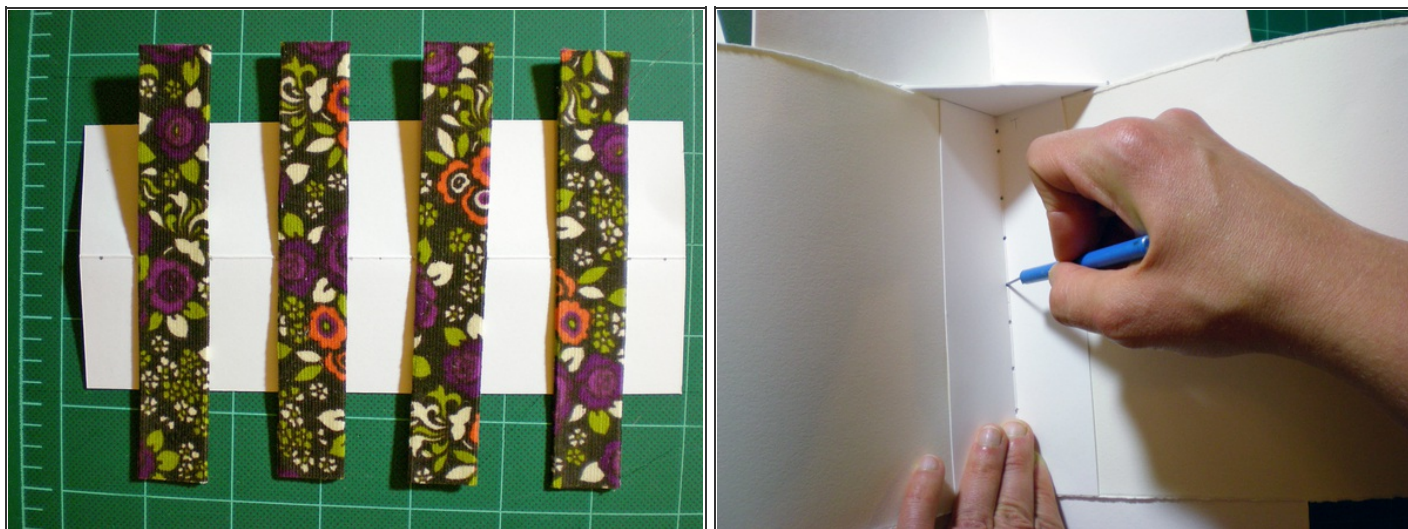
- Cut 2 pieces of book cloth that are  $\frac{1}{4}$ " shorter than your covers' height and width. For the cover with the window, center the cloth on the board, flip over, and trace. Cut the opening.
- Brush glue along the back of the book cloth. Center the book cloth over the board and adhere it using the bone folder. Wrap it in wax paper and place it under some heavy books to dry.
- Repeat with the other cover.

## Step 6 — Make the tapes.



- The tapes are the horizontal bands of book cloth that connect the pages to the covers. Begin by placing the signatures inside the covers and measuring the width of the spine while pushing down gently. Decide how far you want the tapes to wrap around the book, then calculate their length.
- Length of tapes = spine width + front measurement + back measurement
- Decide on the width of the tapes and double this measurement to account for fold-over, as shown.
- Decide on the number of tapes, and cut them. If your book is 6" or taller, use no fewer than 3 tapes.
- Mark, fold, and glue the tapes. Then place them under a stack of books to dry.



**Step 7 — Pierce holes.**

- Make a sewing template out of heavy paper, 3" wide and the same length as the spine. Fold in half lengthwise.
- Unfold the template and place the tapes along it according to where you want them on the book. Mark along the centerline of the template, on either side of each tape. Also mark  $\frac{1}{4}$ " from each end of the template.
- Stack the signatures in the order they'll be sewn, keeping them in order throughout the process. Place the guard from the first signature in the book cradle, lining it up with the stand. Nest the template over the guard and poke holes along the marks with an awl. Repeat with the corresponding signature. Repeat until all guards and signatures are pierced.

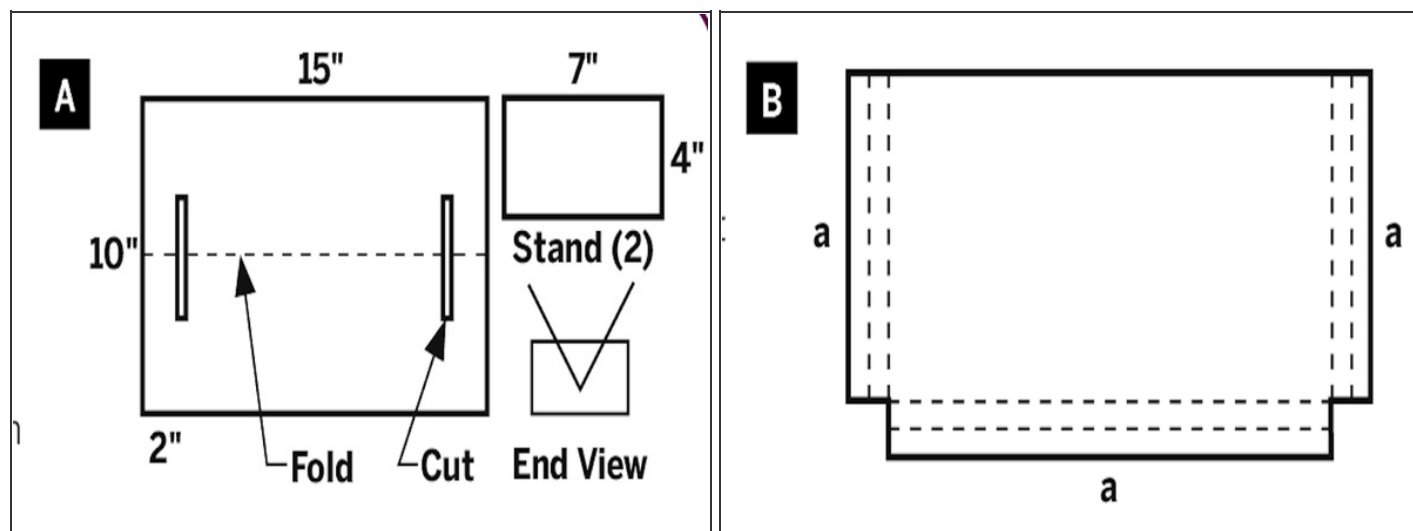


## Step 8 — Sew and glue the book.



- Measure out thread about 10 lengths of the spine
- Referring to the illustration at left, begin sewing from outside the first signature at the head (a) of the book and exiting at the tail (b), securing the tapes in place as you sew. Exit at (b), add the second signature and enter at (c). Continue sewing the second signature up to the head (d). Tie a square knot between (a) and (d) and add the third signature. Sew the third signature downward, then use a link stitch at (c) before adding the fourth signature.
- Continue until all the signatures are added, and tie off with a square knot on the inside of the last signature. Adjust the tapes to center them if needed.
- Place the top cover over the signatures and center the tapes in position. Apply glue to the back of the topmost tape, then hold until it sets. Repeat until all tapes are set. Place under heavy books and let the glue dry for at least 3 hours. Repeat for the back cover.

## Step 9 — Option: make a book cradle and back pocket.



- To make a book cradle, refer to Figure A. The board is scored down the middle and folded into a V shape. The stands fit between the slotted areas.
- This illustration shows the size of cradle I used for my book. If your book is taller than 11", you'll need to make a larger cradle.
- To make a pocket for the back cover, refer to Figure B. The pocket folds will accordion back to create a spring-like action. Note that (a) will be the edges that are glued to the surface of the back cover. With the pocket piece folded, place glue where the bottom edge and side corners meet, and adhere.

This project first appeared in [CRAFT Volume 10](#), page 78.

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